

# CORRELATION STUDY OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY TOWARD READING COMPREHENSION

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## Abstract.

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah ada hubungan antara motivasi, penguasaan kosakata, dan pemahaman membaca siswa. Desain penelitian ini kuantitatif menggunakan *ex post facto designs*. Peneliti menggunakan sampel penelitian sebanyak 28 siswa. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah kuesioner motivasi, tes kosa kata, dan tes pemahaman membaca. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan *Pearson Product Moment Correlation* di SPSS 17.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai  $r$  dari motivasi and pemahaman membaca, penguasaan kosa kata dan pemahaman membaca adalah .862 dan .844. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada hubungan yang berarti antara motivasi, penguasaan kosa kata dan pemahaman membaca siswa. Semakin tinggi motivasi dan penguasaan kosa kata, maka semakin tinggi pemahaman membaca siswa.

The purpose of this study is to find out whether there is a significant correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery toward their reading comprehension or not. It is quantitative research that applied *ex post facto designs*. The researcher employed 28 students of SMPN 31 Bandar Lampung as sample. The instrument of this research was in the form of motivation questionnaire, vocabulary test and reading comprehension test. The collected data were analyzed by using *Pearson Product Moment Correlation* in SPSS 17.0. The result showed that  $r$  of students' motivation and reading comprehension, and students' vocabulary mastery and students' reading comprehension were .862 and .844 respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery toward their reading comprehension. The higher the students' motivation and vocabulary mastery are, the higher the students' reading comprehension achievement is.

**Keyword:** motivation, reading comprehension, vocabulary mastery

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the important skills needed by the students from elementary school up to the university. It is important because by reading, the students will get a lot of information. In learning process the students will understand the material by reading it and they will get the meaning by reading.

Alderson defines reading as “...an enjoyable, intense, private activity, from which much pleasure can be derived, and in which one can become totally absorbed” (2000:28). Reading means different things to different people, for some it is recognizing written words, while for others it is an opportunity to teach pronunciation and practice speaking. However reading always has a purpose. It is something that we do everyday, it is an integral part of our daily lives, taken very much for granted and generally assumed to be something that everyone can do.

Nuttal (1982) states that there are five reading sub-skills that should be mastered by reader to comprehend the text deeply. In this research, the researcher used all of the sub-skill of reading in the test of reading comprehension; they are as follow:

1. Determining main idea  
Determining idea is a skill to grasp and find the main point of the passage by summarizing the passage and looking for repetition of ideas/words.
2. Finding the specific information or part of text  
Finding the specific information or part of text means looking for the information that relevant to the goal in mind and ignores the irrelevant.
3. Finding reference  
Reference is the intentional use of one thing to indicate something else in which one provides the information necessary to interpret the other. Finding reference means interpreting and determining one linguistic expression to another.
4. Finding inference  
Inference is good guess or conclusion drawn based on the logic of passage. Finding inference means the reader imply the sentences or passages understand and conclude it logically.
5. Understanding vocabulary  
Understanding vocabulary means comprehending what the words mean. When vocabulary mastery improves, comprehension tends to be deeper. Since comprehension is ultimate goal of reading, the reader cannot over estimate the importance of vocabulary development.

Reading a book, an article, or passage in English for some students is not an easy work. It relates to some factors, one of them is their lack of vocabulary. It is known, vocabulary is very important to support the development of the four skills of the language. Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write (Richards & Renandya, 2002:255). It means that vocabulary is a language element of human communication; vocabulary is also a tool to plan and solve the problem especially in communication.

Thornbury (2002:3) states that “English words are divided into eight different word classes, i.e: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, prepositions, conjunction, and determiner.” But in this research, the researcher only used noun, verb, adverb and adjective in the test of vocabulary.

a. Noun

In English, there are many types of noun in order to make a sentence, like countable and uncountable, plural and singular, collective nouns, compound nouns, and noun phrase.

b. Verb

There are three important types of verb, namely: *auxiliary verb*, *main verb* and *phrasal verb*.

c. Adjectives

Adjective can be used before and after nouns. They can have many forms, those are comparative and superlative (better and best, more interesting and most

interesting, etc), adjective order, adjective and preposition (interested in, keen on, etc), and adjective as nouns (the blind, etc).

#### d. Adverbs

Adverb can be of time (early, late, etc), manner (he played *well*, she ran *quickly*, etc) and place (in the room, in the kitchen, etc). Adverb can appear at the end of the sentence, at the beginning, or in the middle. It also can modify adjectives, like a *wonderfully* physical performance, an *unusually* large cucumber, etc.

Another important factor is students' motivation in learning English. Motivation is the reason to do something in a particular way. Huit (2001: 1) says "Motivation refers to internal state (sometimes described as a need, desire or want) that serves to activate or energize behavior and give it direction". He also said "Most motivation theorist assume that motivation is involved in the performance of all learned responses, that is a learned behavior will not occur unless it is energized by motivation".

According to that explanation above, Brown (1987: 114) states that motivation is commonly thought as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action. It can be assumed that motivation, in this case, is the positive power which stems from the desire to attain the goal reflected in the orientation, for instance, learning English seriously in order to get a better achievement.

Motivation is an important factor in learning process. In learning English, the students should have high motivation to make the learning process easier. The success of learning depends on the level of students' motivation. It can drive

learners in reaching learning goal. Therefore, motivation is the key of success in learning teaching process. Without motivation, the goal of learning is difficult to be reached.

Therefore, it can be concluded that comprehension is achieved from the knowledge of vocabulary and motivation. If the students want to comprehend the text, they should have motivation for reading the text and have vocabulary mastery to know the content of the text.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in investigating the possible correlation between students' motivation and students' vocabulary mastery in their reading comprehension.

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher aimed to find the correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery toward their reading comprehension. This research is about multiple correlation research. To conduct the research, the researcher used a co-relational design of *ex post facto designs* (Hatch and Farhady, 1982). Here, the researcher only administered the tests to know the level of students' motivation and vocabulary mastery in reading comprehension to a group of students. So, there was no treatment or experiment of any kind to subjects. The researcher gave the questionnaire of motivation and test about vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. After that, the data gained from the test was analyzed to see whether level of motivation and mastering vocabulary

related to the ability of reading comprehension or not. The researcher used quantitative method to analyze the result of research. In this research there were three variables, one dependent and two independent variables. The dependent variable was students' reading comprehension. Independent variables were students' motivation and vocabulary mastery. The score showed the data about students' motivation, vocabulary mastery and achievement in their reading comprehension which can be used to identify the correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. The population of this research was the students of the second grade of SMPN 31 Bandar Lampung. There were 9 classes of the second grade students that consist of 28 students for each class. Then, the researcher chose VIII g through random sampling as a sample in order to find the validity and reliability of the test item. After getting good test items, by the random sampling technique, the researcher employed VIII i at the SMPN 31 Bandar Lampung as the subject to collect the data.

In this research, the researcher used some instruments for conducting the research. The instruments were questionnaire of motivation consisting of 30 questions, test of vocabulary mastery consisting of 30 questions and test of reading comprehension consisting of 25 questions. The test was conducted in 70 minutes for motivation, reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery. The researcher made steps after conducting the research by using tests, the researcher analyzed the data by using Correlation in SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Science) 17.0. The researcher collected the data by looking at the result of motivation

questionnaire and test of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension to find out the result of students' motivation, vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. The result of the test was in form of score. After getting the result, the researcher analyzed two data (1) the correlation between students' motivation and their reading comprehension, and (2) the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Correlation between Students' Vocabulary and Their Reading Comprehension**

In order to know the coefficient correlation between students' motivation and their reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in SPSS 17.

Based on the calculation, the researcher has found that the coefficient correlation between students' motivation and their reading comprehension is .862. The coefficient correlation is higher than the critical value of  $r_{table}(.862 > .37)$ . The statistical analysis also shows that the correlation between students' motivation and their reading comprehension is significant ( $p < .01$ ;  $p = .000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted. The result of this research shows that student's motivation significantly correlates with their reading comprehension. It indicates that motivation and reading comprehension cannot be separated for each other.

### **Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension**

In order to know the coefficient correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in SPSS 17.

Based on the calculation, the researcher has found that the coefficient correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension is .844. The coefficient correlation is higher than the critical value of  $r_{table}(.844 > .3)$ . The statistical analysis also shows that the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension is significant ( $p < .01$ ;  $p = .000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted. The result of this research shows that student's vocabulary mastery significantly correlates with their reading comprehension. It indicates that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension cannot be separated for each other.

### **DISCUSSION**

The main finding of this research is whether there is a significant correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery and students' reading comprehension or not. Based on the result above, it is found that it is in line with what has been found by previous studies. It is described below.



### **Motivation in Learning English and Reading Comprehension**

The result shows that there is a correlation between students' motivation in learning English and their reading comprehension. In line with the result of the research conducted by Knoll(2011 "The high correlation between reading comprehension and achievement motivation found in this study coincide quite closely with the original results of the test for motivation. In that instance an r factor of .718 was derived from a comparison of the test for motivation scores with those of a general "Reading Achievement" test. While this study looks at a more specific reading skill (i.e. comprehension), it is interesting to note the similarity in the relationships". The researcher also says that the high correlation between motivation and reading comprehension leads to several conclusions. The first of these conclusions is the idea that classroom instructors need to focus as much on the motivation of their students as on direct instruction of reading comprehension techniques.

Therefore, students' motivation in learning English has become an important part in English language teaching. The teacher should concentrate on increasing students' motivation in learning English to get the good result in teaching process.

### **Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension**

The result of this research is in line with the result of the research conducted by Chen (2011) about The Impact of EFL Students' Vocabulary Breadth of Knowledge on Literal Reading comprehension. The quantitative result of Chen's research indicates that vocabulary breadth of knowledge was correlated to literal

reading comprehension. The researcher also says that “reading comprehension is affected by vocabulary mastery”.

In general, students’ vocabulary mastery improves their reading comprehension significantly. When the students have adequate vocabulary, the students will comprehend the text fully. By reading many passages of the reading texts, the students tend to learn new words and they are curious to know the meaning of the words. On the other way, when the students do not have adequate vocabulary, they are confused with the text that they read.

In a small case, there was a student who got high score in vocabulary mastery test but she got low score in reading comprehension test. This shows that there was no correlation between her vocabulary mastery and her reading comprehension. The researcher clarified to the student and asked the reason why she got low score in reading comprehension. The student gave some reasons. The first reason was that she did not like to read the texts. For her, texts in reading comprehension were very long and she was very lazy to read it. The second reason was because she did not understand the text. She said that when she found the long text, she was confused with the meaning. Those were the reasons why she got low score in reading comprehension. It means that, there was no correlation between her vocabulary mastery and her reading comprehension. But, it happened because of some reasons.

Based on the statement above it reveals that motivation and vocabulary are important in learning language especially in reading.

## CONCLUSION

1. Motivation is one of factors that influence reading comprehension.

Students who have high motivation tend to have good comprehension in reading texts. In other words, students' motivation influences their reading comprehension.

2. Vocabulary is needed to comprehend the texts well. Good vocabulary mastery can influence students' reading comprehension. Those, reading comprehension is affected by vocabulary mastery.

There is a significant correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary mastery toward their reading comprehension. It means that the higher level of students' motivation and vocabulary mastery are, the higher students' reading comprehension achievement is.

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